stations reserved accomodation can be booked not only against the station quota but also from the originating station quota after their quota is exhausted. At Barddhaman, the computerised reservation facility is likely to be provided shortly and with the commissioning of this facility, the station will have the same facility as are available at Raniganj, Durgapur and Asansol stations. At Panagarh, the existing quota is not being fully utilised and as such, the same is considered adequate.

Konkan Railway

2881. SHRI A.C. JOS :
SHRI A.G.C. RAM BABU :
SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the progress made in the work of Konkan Railway Project;

(b) the details of unfinished tunnel work;

(c) the sections which have been opened or proposed to be opened for passengers/goods traffic;

(d) the reasons for the delay in starting the passengers traffic; and

(e) the time by which the full project of Konkan Railway is likely to be completed and the States which are the main beneficiaries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) The weighted Physical Progress of work till end of 28th February 1997 is 98.20%

(b) The present status of unfinished tunnels is as under:

	Length (Mtrs).	Balance Heading (Mtrs)	Works Benching (Mtrs.)	Target date for completion
Byndoor	1960	3.0	15.0	31.3.97
Padi	1915	-	60.0	30.4.97
Old Goa	542	-	144.0	31.5.96
Pernem	1534	282.0	539.0	31.6.97

(c) and (e) Roha-Sawantwadi (364 Kms.) and Mangalore-Kundapura (100Kms) have already been commissioned. Kundapura-Canacona section is expected to be commissioned by 30.4.97. The entire length of Konkan Railways is expected to be opened for goods traffic by June '97 and for passenger traffic immediately thereafter, subject to the Pernem Tunnel being completed as per the targets mentioned at (b) above.

The main beneficiary States are Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka and Kerala.

(d) The main reasons for delay is constraints of resources and adverse geological conditions in softsoil tunnels in Goa and Karnataka area.

Winding up of ITDC

2882. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have since taken any decision to wind up the India Tourism Development Corporation;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether new hotels will be constructed at Calcutta and any other places of West Bengal under this organisation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) ITDC's Annual Plan for 1997-98 does not include any scheme/provision to set-up new hotels in the state of West Bengal, including Calcutta.

Telephone Exchanges in West Bengal

2883. SHRI ANIL BASU : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal for opening of more Telephone Exchanges in West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; district-wise, location-wise; and

(c) steps taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir

(b) and (c) The commissioning programme for 1997-98 has yet not been finalised.

Air Services to Jalpaiguri

2884. PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to connect Jalpaiguru with air service;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHIR C. M. IBRAHIM) : (a) to (c) There is no airport/airstrip available at Jalpaiguri. However, the needs of the air traffic are being met by the Bangdogra airport which is nearest to Japaiguri.

Running of Rajdhani Express with less number of Passengers

2885. SHRI MEHBOOB ZAHEDI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that 2309/2310 Rajdhani Express in running with less number of passengers;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that there are less number of passengers on Lucknow-New Delhi Route;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government are aware of the demand of people for running the Patna passenger train *via* Mugal Sarai-Allahabad instead of Varanasi-Lucknow;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the Government are also considering the demand to run this train from Patna on Thursday and Sunday and from New Delhi on Monday and Friday;

(g) if so, the steps taken by the Government to fulfil this demand; and

(h) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c) The occupation of the 2309/2310 Patna-New Delhi-Patna Rajdhani Express trains in different classes on both directions ranges from 50% to 70%. The utilisation of quota allotted to Lucknow by 2309 Patna-New Delhi Rajdhani Express in AC 2-tier & AC 3-tier is 62.5% and 53%, respectively.

(d) and (e) Some representations have been received for running of 2309/2310 New Delhi-Patna Rajdhani Express *via* Allahabad-Mugalsarai.

(f) There is no such proposal at present.

(g) Does not arise.

(h) Due to operational constraints. Moreover, Rajdhani service is available from Patna on Thursdays and Sundays and from New Delhi for Patna on Mondays and Fridays.

Construction of Foot Overbridge at Bandel Railway Station

2886. SHRI RUP CHAND PAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any progress has been made in respect of construction of foot over-bridge connecting all platforms of Bandel Railways Station under Howrah Division of Eastern Railway;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if so, the reasons for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) There is no proposal for construction of a foot over bridge at Bandel station at present.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Maintenance Facility

2887. SHRI UDDHAB BARMAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to provide maintenance facility for air-brake and air conditioning coaches at Guwahati and New Jalpaiguri Railway stations; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) At present, Guwahati coaching Depot has been provided with maintenance facilities for air brake and air conditioning, coaching stock. New Jalpaiguri Coaching Depot facilities will be modified in the near future.

Opening of STD/ISD Booth at Howrah Railway Station

2888. DR. ASIM BALA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to open a STD/ ISD Booth on platform No.9 at Howrah Railway station;

(b) if so, the reasons for the delay to open such a booth at this platform; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to open this booth at an early date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.